

(d) if so, the status thereof and by when the review of progress of restructuring of UCBs would be completed; and

(e) whether the strong UCBs would be allowed new branches?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House to the extent available.

New Pension Scheme

2198. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to enforce the New Pension Scheme (NPS) through an executive order in view of the delay in getting the Pension Fund Regulatory Development Authority (PFRDA) Bill passed in Parliament; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) and (b) A new restructured defined contribution pension system for new entrants to Central Government service, except to the Armed Forces, in the first stage, replacing the existing system of defined benefit pension, was notified on 22nd December, 2003. The new system was implemented with effect from 1st January 2004. Under the new system, the monthly contribution by the employee is 10% of the salary and DA. A matching contribution is given by the Central Government.

Slow progress of IT project

2199. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Income Tax Department's flagship IT project for a nationwide network to streamline data collection, compliance and surveillance has virtually come to a halt;

(b) whether it is also a fact that it is almost 14 years after the project

was kicked off and Government have already spent Rs. 100 crore, but no one in the department knows about its progress; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and the action proposed thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (c) Comprehensive Computerisation in the Income Tax Department which was initiated in year 1994-95 is an ongoing project. The creation of a nationwide network is one of its components. The Department has made considerable progress, *inter-alia*, in the allotment of permanent account number (PAN), tax accounting, processing of returns, filing of TDS returns and annual information returns (AIR). One of the recent successful initiatives has been compulsory electronic filing of return by corporate taxpayers.

As regards networking, initially, 60 cities of the country were networked on leased line basis technology. Subsequent to this initiative, it was decided to establish a single national data base whereby other 450 cities would also be put on the network. For this purpose, Internet Protocol based Virtual Private Network (IP-VPN) technology was adopted and a contract was entered with M/s Bharti Airtel Ltd. on 28.10.2005 for connecting 745 buildings of the Income Tax Department located in 510 cities (including 60 cities which were earlier networked on leased line basis). 219 buildings in 60 cities have already been networked under the new system. Another 43 cities would be on network by 31st December, 2006. More cities would also be on network in the coming months.

For the purpose of networking, Income Tax Department, has so far paid a sum of Rs. 19.83 crores to M/s Bharti Airtel Ltd. out of total sum of Rs. 240 crores (excluding Service Tax) to be paid over a period of five years.

Services set up by Banking Codes Board

2200. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Banking Codes and Standards Board of India has enrolled 52 commercial banks that account for nearly 93 per cent of the banking business;